

Montana's Regional Innovation Grant (RIG)
MEETING SUMMARY

CORE LEADERSHIP GROUP
Ronan, Montana

Prepared for
Montana Department of Labor & Industry
February 18, 19, 2009

Montana Department of Labor & Industry (DOLI)
Montana's Regional Innovation Grant (RIG)
CORE LEADERSHIP GROUP (Meeting 4)
February 18, 19, 2009

Session Summary

SESSION OBJECTIVES

1. Update each other and check in on the process.
2. Review completed "white papers"; validate/finalize industry clusters and workforce needs associated with them.
3. Develop broad and industry specific recommendations.
4. Describe a regional vision and the social network needed to support it.

CORE GROUP MEMBERS ATTENDING

- Tim Bronk (Superintendent, Darby Schools)
- Susie Burch (Flathead Community College)
- Marnie Criley (Restore Montana)
- Shelly Fyant (Kicking Horse Job Corps Center)
- Pat Hulla (Montana Dept. of Labor and Industry; nw Montana)
- Debbie Krantz (Lake/Sanders County Job Service; Polson/Thompson Falls)
- Greg Landon (MTC Job Corps)
- Billie Lee (Lake County Community Development)
- Ray Marshall (Sanders County Community Development)
- Kim Morisaki (Montana West Economic Development)
- Jim Morton (District XI Human Resource Council)
- Jennifer Nelson (NW Montana Economic Development District)
- Doug Rauthe (Northwest Montana Human Resources)
- Dixie Stark (Literacy Bitterroot; Darby School Board)
- Lynn Stocking (University of Montana, College of Technology)
- Charlie Wright (Montana Department of Commerce)

TECHNICAL ADVISORS/FACILITATORS

- Kay Strayer (Montana Department of Labor & Industry)
- Casey Kyler-West (Montana Department of Labor & Industry)
- Marcia Hogan (Facilitator)
- Sherry Munther (Facilitator)
- Virginia Tribe (Facilitator)

INTRODUCTION

The Core Leadership Group for Montana's Regional Innovation Grant (RIG) held their fourth meeting on February 18, 19, 2009. The following summarizes who attended; general information sharing; final draft findings and recommendations regarding 4 agreed upon industry clusters; and next steps.

COMPLETED AGENDA ITEMS

Getting Started

- Brief Review of the Core Group's Ground Rules and Community sessions' Guiding Principles (See APPENDIX A)

Revisiting the Operating Environment - "Positive News from the Outside"

- A co-generation, bio-mass project with Stoltz Lumber is moving forward.
- This is not California – our economic conditions are better. Montana is reported to be one of 4 States without a budget deficit. Statistics related to the economic situation indicate that "small is good". For example, Vann's Appliance, a Montana owned Company, is the number one appliance vendor in the county – using e-bay and other platforms.
- The economy is changing with mobile technologies and this allows local businesses to expand and stay local. Training is being offered to help local businesses understand and use all the tools out there.
- Five wind projects are moving forward in Montana and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will encourage more "green jobs". This will include jobs like wind turbine mechanics and technicians.
- The Recovery and Reinvestment Act brings good opportunities and big responsibility.
- We're seeing growing interest in bio-mass possibilities.
- Job Corp enrollment is up significantly and we're seeing changes in how Job Corp placement occurs.
- The 7 Job Service Offices in the Region are doing well in responding to people who have been laid off – and they're getting better at serving those folks all the time.
- We're seeing some increase in small business start-ups – people are creative and serious when they need to be. Training is being offered to assist small new business start-ups – serving approximately 31 small and/or minority-owned businesses. People are looking at business with the government beyond fire.
- A new 30 million dollar Hospital is opening in Ronan with new employees who bring some ethnic diversity. Ethnic diversity is a benefit competing for employees in today's rapidly changing demographics.

Operating Environment cont.

- The lay-offs at the Mine in Troy and Semi-Tool have not occurred yet.
- The sale of the Stimson site at Bonner is moving ahead with plans that should result in jobs and local development.
- New “mystery” businesses (perhaps associated with “cellulosic”) are completing plans to come to Western Montana with about 150 jobs expected. Sanjou manufacturing is very close to locating in the Flathead.
- Health care is strong and real estate is not. Montana is better off than some states in terms of small manufacturing.
- Leadership Montana is accepting applications for next year and those who have been involved would recommend applying to everyone in the room. Northwest Montana is underrepresented in the program. The cost is \$2500.00 and includes some travel.
- A student in the Bitterroot reported that she “owns her own place; has graduated from a high school program and has a full-time job; and has and is raising a healthy baby”. That’s positive news!
- Although the community college was turned down in the Legislature, the Bitterroot is adopting the concept of INDY from fruit fly scientists who name genes. INDY is “I’m not dead yet!”
- The WIRED grant covers 32 Counties in the north and eastern parts of the State. DOL has recently received an additional \$700,000 for WIRED training in that area.
- The Pablo campus is sponsoring a Job Fair.
- Customers seem to be having a harder time being polite in some businesses.
- Members of our Congressional Delegation are discussing stimulus possibilities around the State including co-generation; geo-thermal possibilities; infrastructure money for roads, bridges, and water developments; home weatherization, etc. Organizations are already gearing up in the area of home weatherization. “Energy Auditor” training is available at Dawson Community College in Glendive.
- Senators Baucus and Tester worked to ensure an interim contract for electricity for the Columbia Falls Aluminum Plant with BPA – allowing them to continue operating.
- NMAD may have an opportunity to develop response trailers for people losing their homes.
- Tanif surcharge will be ½ of 1% of the Recovery and Reinvestment Act.
- Demand for programs that offer a GED has doubled.
- With the current lease coming to an end, some folks in Darby are putting together a plan that would locate the main Forest Service office on Forest Service-owned land in Darby rather than the rented building in Hamilton.
- SCHIP has been expanded to cover more kids and Medicaid dollars will come without a match.

Conference Reports

DOLI personnel reported on the Harvesting Clean Energy Conference held in Billings January 25-27. Key information from the conference that relates to Western Montana's RIG process included:

- Cited as crucial job training for energy related businesses were solar panel installation; welding; energy auditors; safety supervisors; wind farm supervisors; electrical engineers; construction workers; fiberglass workers; turbine maintenance; and geothermal heat/air conditioning system installation.
- Seventy-five per cent of all workers need retraining.
- Over 2/3 of new jobs will be knowledge based.
- The website for the Center for Energy Workforce Development – <http://www.getintoenergy.com> – features lesson plans for teachers; a Career Assessment tool; locator for training and jobs in the energy arena and videos, etc.
- Curriculum is available for a Renewable Energy Technology Program at <http://www.cgcc.cc.or.us/Academics/RenewableEnergyTechnology.cfm> (Contact - Susan Wolf, Chief Academic Officer at Columbia Gorge Community College)
- Notes/PowerPoint presentations from the Conference will be available at <http://www.harvestcleanenergy.org/conference/index.html>.

Progress Reports on Mini-Grants

Jennifer Nelson – Northwest Montana Economic Development District

- The Consultant will complete his draft report by March to include an assessment of feedstock; infrastructure; and restoration strategies.
- Information from the completed project will be available for the RIG Draft Report by the established April deadline.

Billie Lee – Western Rural Development Region and Lake County Community Development (CRDC)

- The process is underway to identify entities within the defined area to target; identify their workforce needs; determine the capacity of educational institutions to provide for those needs; and develop strategies for moving forward.
- Information from the completed project will be available for the RIG Draft Report by the established April deadline.

Chad DeLong – Missoula Area Economic Development Corporation (MAEDC)

- Chad was not present at the meeting and no progress report was available.
- Core Group members requested that DOLI follow up on the progress of the MAEDC mini-grant.

Reviewing the Draft Report Suggested Outline

Facilitators presented a Draft Report Outline and received the following feedback from Core Group members:

- Include an overall introduction of general findings - with 4 or 5 “global statements” about what needs to change in Western Montana; the benefits of regionalization, etc., should be at the beginning of the Draft Report.
- Summarize the industry clusters findings.
- Unless a recommendation obviously applies only to a specific industry cluster, recommendations should be listed together in their own section.
- Should the “effectiveness measures” be moved to the front end of recommendations?
- The recommendations should include:
 - Crossover skills
 - Action steps where possible with suggested “shepherds”.
- The Report would be strengthened with the addition of a glossary. Core Group members were asked to contribute to the glossary.
- Do we need a section on “ideas that fall under economic development”?
- Community and Core Group meeting notes should be summarized as Appendices to the Draft Report.

Finalizing “Industry Cluster” Findings and Recommendations

Industry Cluster small work groups finalized their “white papers” and presented draft recommendations to the full Core Group (see attached APPENDICES “Energy”; Forest-Based Products, Stewardship, and Forest Restoration”; “Healthcare and Health Professions”; and “Infrastructure/Public Works”).

Following the presentations, discussions, and some Group edits, the Core Group agreed to have the facilitators edit the small group products for consistency in format, etc. Those edited versions will be reviewed as part of the overall review of the Draft Report which will be sent to Core Group members on March 6.

Describing a Regional Vision and Social Network Needed to Support It

Core Group members worked in small groups to brainstorm ideas about crossover skills; a regional vision and social network to support that vision; and post-grant marketing ideas. The facilitators agreed to use that brainstorming to draft those sections. The Core Group will review as part of the overall review of the Draft Report.

Where do we go from here?

- The facilitators will complete the Draft Report and send it to Core Group members for review by the end of March 6. They are asking that comments be returned by Wednesday, March 11. The facilitators will complete the Draft Report and send to Kay Strayer on March 13.
- Post-RIG Grant suggestions include:
 1. Share the Draft Report with the Department of Labor & Industry Commissioner and the Governor. It might be useful to have a few Core Group members involved in that presentation.
 2. Share the final Draft Report with local communities – particularly those who participated in the summer 2008 community meetings.
 3. Do timely post-grant marketing.
 4. Find/implement strategies that are faster in their response to workforce training.
 5. Work to do away with artificial timelines so we are all realistic about moving forward in uncertain times.
 6. Make all State “region” designations consistent across Departments.
 7. Consider bringing the Core Group and others together once a month. Consider starting a “Blog” as a tool to continue and expand the Core Group discussion and actions.
 8. Consider a Western Montana Action Plan Conference.
 9. Find successful strategies for getting the attention of schools at all grade levels.
- Casey will prepare a news release and include RIG outcomes in Department newsletters, etc.

APPENDIX A - Discussion Ground Rules; Community Guiding Principles

Core Leadership Group Discussion Ground Rules

- Speak one at a time. Share your thoughts openly but honor a “three minute” rule.
- Listen actively and honorably. Allow the other to finish.
- If you don't agree with another's comments: (1) Do “active listening” to be sure you are clear about their statement; (2) offer a useful, thoughtful alternative – rather than just disagreement and critique.
- In this less than formal setting and in this more relaxed environment, be frank, simple, direct, and honest while refraining from personal attacks. Give each other the opportunity to voice opinions safely.
- Be tolerant of process – it may seem tedious but a durable collaborative outcome takes time and intentional collective effort.
- Recognize and honor roles.
- Honor timeframes. Stay on track and help the group stay on track.
- Avoid side conversations.
- Turn off your cell phones and other electronic communicating devices (or in the case of an emergency, ask the group's permission to leave it on).
- Recognizing the usefulness of consensus recommendations to the Department of Labor and Industry, aim for 100% agreement – acknowledging that there will be issues where 100% is not possible. In this situation, 100% will mean that everyone “can live with it” – and agrees not to sabotage it on the outside.
- The Facilitators will manage the discussion through an interest-based process toward agreement(s). Where necessary and useful to the eventual outcomes, the Core Group will revisit this particular ground rule.
- Demonstrate respect and honor the spirit of confidentiality.

Guiding Principles from Community Sessions

Participants at the 4 community meetings were asked to think about core values that would provide guidance and help narrow the decision space regarding the eventual RIG recommendations. Some shared core values were:

- The importance of diversity in industries, workforce, and skill sets/talents
- The value of lifelong learning and educational systems that are connected, accessible, affordable, and adaptable
- A value for business that recognizes the importance and connection between profit, the community and the environment (“triple bottom line”)
- Respect for human potential and a decent wage
- Partnerships, interdependence, and the value of enduring relationships
- Sense of community/importance of facilitating community generations
- Inclusion
- Quality of life and sustainability
- Accountability

Guiding Principles cont.

Samplings of the guiding principles representing those values are listed below:

- We believe that a diverse economy creates opportunity and stability.
- We believe in lifelong learning and that education is a key catalyst in facilitating diverse economies.
- We believe that our workforce must be diverse, including people of all ability levels, because it's everyone's right to have the opportunity to work.
- We believe that everyone should have the opportunity for affordable training and education.
- We believe that partnerships between business and education are necessary to build strong communities and a robust economy and that what makes up training has to have the input of business/employers.
- We believe that businesses are most successful when they recognize economics, community and the environment (the "triple bottom line").
- We believe Montana should be a place where young people can and want to stay and that we should recruit businesses to Montana that offer "living wages".
- We believe in human potential – that people ought to be able to grow and develop in their work and have a sense of satisfaction in the workplace.
- We believe it is a worthy endeavor to help people achieve their potential and that individual potential contributes to the overall community potential.
- We believe that, in order to have a sustainable economy, we need to build an economy that attracts and engages the next generation.
- We believe that public funds should be judiciously utilized to teach people skills and foster career decisions toward relevant employment.
- We believe that the role of government is to provide the physical and legal infrastructure for communities and businesses to compete and succeed while stewarding the environment and sustaining local quality of life.
- We believe quality of life attributes are important factors in this discussion.
- We believe that we all own all the problems – and that no area should be left behind. We benefit or are impacted by what happens to the workforce, to businesses, and to communities.

A few guiding principles brought more specific points to the discussion. For example, the guiding principle stated below captures the frustration many feel regarding the apparent inability of federal managers to proactively manage the National Forests for reliable timber/wood products. But at the same time, it recognizes the need to look forward and perhaps redefine "timber industry" in today's world.

- We believe that sustainable management of our forests was and can again be a reality. We also recognize that we have to look at alternative ways to take advantage of our forests.

Guiding Principles cont.

Some felt that the best training and education for today's workforce is one that provides the learner with choices and flexibility because the skills/talents acquired are more portable industry to industry.

- We believe that all people have the right to be heard and that learners are more vested when prepared in such a way that they have choices.
- We recognize that "soft skills" are important to workforce development and to having successful businesses in the 21st century.

Discussion about communication systems and our technological world led to the following guiding principle that expands thinking about what a "business", "industry", "job" is...

- We recognize that a business does not always have to have a storefront and/or a physical product.

Finally, participants in one way or another felt that collaboration and coordination throughout a region are more productive approaches and contribute to leveraging resources and forming enduring interdependent relationships.

- We believe that the process should not encourage harmful competition and divisiveness among local communities.
- We believe that in communities and a regional economy, we should celebrate our successes.

APPENDIX B - Energy – Findings and Draft Recommendations

The energy industry in western Montana ranges from the traditional and stable utilities through more established alternatives such as solar. The industry is in flux, even the parlance is changing. It also includes some preliminary exploration into other alternatives such as geothermal. A review of NAICS codes for regional businesses shows a wide variety in all counties and many small entities. Indications are that current and near future workforce needs will primarily be for replacement of an aging workforce, particularly for linemen. In the longer term plans for alternative development and replacement of transmission systems may open up a demand for different skill sets, customer service and skilled transmission construction workers. Most companies are in initial planning phases for this. It is recommended that workforce planning groups such as RIG continue to communicate with the energy industry in western Montana and monitor developments. As more concrete information is available planning groups consisting of workforce development, education, industry, economic development and community based organizations can develop a concrete response to workforce needs.

New websites from energy conference:

<http://www.getintoenergy.com>

<http://www.cgcc.cc.or.us/Academics/RenewableEnergyTechnology.cfm>

2. What are the individual recommendations to include the desired end result?
 - a. Determine the existing employers' certification needs and industry standards that will need to be met for employees to progress so that they are poised for new potential jobs.
 - b. Determine core-competencies for potential workers and commonalities in the energy industry with DLI research so that we can prepare our workers for the rapidly changing work environment.
 - a. Transferable and Adaptable knowledge, skills and abilities.
 - c. Research which states are excelling at attracting new energy companies and determine what their best practices in work force training are in order to use our financial, educational and human resources most efficiently.
 - d. Determine how we integrate educational resources available in our community as a full partner in meeting the educational and training needs of our developing industries and employers. Streamline the process for students to identify their skills and interests, understand the required classes, and recognize the opportunities that will result from different levels of education in that area. For example, study the creation, implementation and outcomes of the Glacier and Polson High School Cluster Programs for application throughout the region.

3. For each recommendation, list specific action steps for the next 12 months to include benchmarks, and responsible parties/ "shepherds".
 - a. Commission a study of existing industry certifications that are required for workers to be hired or progress. This should be a DLI or RIG study.
Benchmark: Comprehensive list of certifications, contacts, and requirements.
 - b. Determine the level of pre-requisite skill level required to enter the industry. Benchmark: Industry approved list of core-competencies.
 - c. Check with the State and Tom Kaizerski at the Department of Commerce's Energy Infrastructure Office to determine what research has already been done. Contact ESTEC Center at MSU for collaboration and possible implementation options. Establish a methodology for collecting and updating relevant best practices. Make the results accessible to west side education organizations, economic development groups, businesses and work force providers. Who?? Longterm organization? ESTEC??
Benchmark: Common database available to interested partners.
 - d. Facilitate a roundtable meeting with the Board of Regents/ School Boards/Board of Public Education/Department of Commerce/Governors office to share the RIG Outcome and include discussing Best Practices, new methodologies results of local projects. Shepherd=Tim! DLI host a conference? Benchmark: Conference happens.
4. List what you consider to be "effectiveness measures."
 - a. Dialogue begins and increased collaboration by education, economic development and workforce.
 - b. Potential workers are identified, informed and recruited.
 - c. Workforce development partners (Community Management Team, State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) and Job Service Employer Committees) have depth knowledge of industry needs and good assessment skills to guide job seekers in planning careers in an industry using a lifelong learning approach.
 - d. Increase worker understanding of career ladder and skill portability.
 - e. Stated success in workforce supply by industry.

Ongoing research component on the industry fed into the Montana Career Information System with updated industry certifications.

APPENDIX C

Forest-Based Products, Stewardship, and Forest Restoration – Findings and Draft Recommendations

1. Based on your white paper, affirm/list specific as well as transferable identified skills needed.

Specific Skills

Foresters – procurement/prescription/silvicultural/presale/reforestation,
Engineers – civil, road, logging, safety, chemical and industrial engineers,
Environmental planner – pre-logging and restoration, wildlife and fish biologists, hydrologists, botanists, cultural resources specialists, timber marking and layout crews, surveyors, GIS mapping specialists, tree planters, cone collectors, survey and monitoring crews, slashing crews, loggers, truckers, equipment operators – logging and restoration operations, scalers, mechanics, millwrights, boiler operators, welders, fabricators, electricians, market analysts, market development, Research and Development, economists, human resources, safety officers, purchasing agents, resource clerks, accounting staff, secretaries, office managers, maintenance, receptionists. Also, soil conservationists, soil scientists, environmental scientists and engineers, microbiologists, chemists, restoration specialists, noxious weed specialists, forest geneticists, forest product and environmental designers, wood technologists, onsite and offsite quality control specialists, water purification specialists, wastewater operators/management, more forest laborers.

Transferable Skills

Civil, safety, chemical and industrial engineers, surveyors, GIS mapping specialists, truckers, equipment operators, mechanics, boiler operators, welders, fabricators, electricians, market analysts, market development, economists, human resources, safety officers, purchasing agents, resource clerks, accounting staff, secretaries, office managers, maintenance, receptionists. Also, environmental scientists and engineers, microbiologists, water purification specialists, wastewater operators/management.

2. Identify and briefly discuss current “talent” pipelines in the region and their ability to respond to the identified needs.

- FVCC- develop continuing education around employer needs, heavy equipment program, forestry
- Glacier Institute – outdoor learning center
- Northwest Connections- has educational classes for stewardship and restoration, collaboration efforts
- Swan Valley Eco-system-ecosystem study
- University of Montana-Forestry, wildland restoration, wildlife biology

- Montana State University – Engineering - civil, environmental, mechanical, electrical, chemical, biological Agriculture – land rehabilitation, environmental sciences
- Montana Tech – engineering- civil, environmental, welding, mechanical, safety, electrical
- Montana Logging Association –accredited logger program
- Montana Wood Products – (Tracy to identify)
- Montana Forest Restoration Committee- they developed the Guiding Principles and Recommended Implementation for Restoring Montana's National Forest Lands
- MSU Extension Office/Youth Programs
- Salish Kootenai College – forestry, engineering graphics, environmental science
- Montana Legacy Project (if it gets funded)- can provide opportunities to do pilot programs for stewardship, community forestry,

3. Map the gaps:

Gap 1 - There is a “gap” between available resource and supply needs. The resource is there, but is essentially unavailable. This issue has been at the heart of the forest products demise in western Montana. Most of the forested land in the area is U.S. Forest Service and subject to national policy, specifically the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Local and regional economics have been strongly affected by the outcomes of agency decisions, the lengthy appeal process and litigations. The process that was intended to protect resources has dissolved into controversy, stalemate and ultimately neglect of forest resources.

Gap 2 – There is a gap between forest policy, energy mandates, and economic feasibility. Through the Health Forest Restoration Act of 2003, some of the opposition to forest management has been reduced, as most people support protection of homes from wildfire in the wildland urban interface. However, the material removed from these areas is primarily small diameter wood with limited, little or no current timber value. Policies and mandates need to be reviewed and determined if they are still appropriate or feasible.

Gap 3 - Technologies and markets need to be developed that can utilize this material and offer an economic return. If cellulosic ethanol technology was more advanced and developers were able to show economic feasibility of this type of ethanol production, then forest mechanization technology would follow. But development of specialized equipment is expensive and risky, as is purchase of new equipment for logging companies. Money needs to be made available for equipment development, and for logging entrepreneurs.

Gap 4 – Current transportation of forest products is expensive and antiquated. Loss of local mills has resulted in long haul distances to get the raw forest material to processing sites. For example, instead of a driver making four trips to a local mill per day, he now can only make two trips to the regional mill per day. If he is paid per load, his pay has been cut in half. If he is paid per hour or mile, the contractor paying the driver's wages is paying more to get the logs to the mill for the same load of logs. Highway use taxes are high, insurance is high, fuel and the associated fuel taxes are high, more miles on trucks result in greater wear and depreciation reducing the value of the equipment and increasing maintenance costs for the same load of logs. Regularly serviced railroad sidings need to be established at key locations to move products, this is especially true for smaller diameter wood products that require a lot of handling and have a marginal economic return. Better transportation would improve the economics of using small diameter wood, and moving finished wood products from the processing areas to marketing areas. Government needs to develop new rail system and encourage rail companies assist community development by offering incentives.

Gap 5 – Restoration work must have funding either through economic return from forest products or from government programs funded through taxes. Valuation of products needs to reflect costs.

Gap 6 – Values for clean water, air, forest carbon sequestration, forest aesthetics, etc. have not been quantify making environmental stewardship economics difficult to establish. Establish some guidelines.

Gap 7 – Making long term stewardship of corporate forest lands part of a corporation's bottom line. Offer incentives, bear the burden legislation.

Gap 8 – Means to keep corporate timberlands in the timber land base, i.e. Plum Creek's real estate divestiture. This may become very important in the carbon sequestration issue. Offer incentives, historical use or bear the burden legislation.

Gap 9 – Loss of traditional mill operations skills, logging skills, environmental awareness, i.e. an equipment operator knowing by ground indicators (plants, topography, etc) that an area may have subsurface water, and thereby avoiding the area. Training, mentoring.

4. Identify opportunities for "real" collaboration and coordination regarding this cluster.

Many opportunities for collaboration and coordination have been identified in the *Regional Blueprint* developed by MAEDC. Additional opportunities will be identified in the forest products and restoration assessments being done by Rich Lane, under the RIG grant. Essential for any "real" collaboration is working with industry, state and federal agencies, economic developers, and educators.

In addition:

- Jobs in the Woods program similar to what was reported in the Framing Our Community, in collaboration with groups such as Wallowa Resources, Kootenai Forest Stakeholders and Northeast Washington Forestry Coalitions.
- Mimic the Blackfoot Challenge in other areas building on their success- a prime opportunity would be the Galton Project on the Murphy Lake District but that comes with significant barriers and challenges for collaboration
- Cooperatives for workforce development- building a cooperative of contractors (in all aspects from restoration, forestry, wildlife, timber, production and stewardship) that can respond to sales. Especially for stewardship projects as Stewardship projects can be difficult to organize. This approach could also help on the bonding of a project as well. This approach is being proposed by Marcie Allen, and Tracy McIntyre.
- Montana Legacy Project, if funded, has great opportunities to explore community management of forest lands.
- Collaboration of businesses- build one business off of another - utilizing waste materials for biomass, landscaping, fertilization, firewood etc, and use products such as post and poles, beams, specialty dimensional lumber, studs etc, locally as much as possible.
- A major connection/collaboration would be to build a partnership amongst the building/construction industry- possible partnership with the Flathead Building Association (with their associate association in Polson and Eureka), and the Flathead Building and Industries to buy locally made timber products instead of shipping materials in

5. Draft recommendations specific to this cluster.

- Quantify availability of accessible forest product feedstocks
- Gain financial support at the state level to invest in new forest technologies.
- Lobby for utilization of forest biomass on federal lands.
- Identify carbon sequestration and credit opportunities by:
 - governmental agencies (at all levels)
 - conservations groups
 - private businesses.

- Support the efforts to build a state wide RLF program for timber related production/business development including biomass.
- Make connections with current forest related businesses and provide them with assistance now instead of waiting until closures are announced, utilizing business-related programs such as BEAR.
- Build on successful collaborations, such as the Kootenai Forest Stakeholders and the Blackfoot Challenge.
- Provide definitions of buzz words such as "Restoration", "Stewardship", etc., to decision makers.
- Provide decision makers with the information that "failure to act" on their part will result in the collapse of the infrastructure supporting the wood products industry.
- Help decision makers understand the ramifications of the negative impact to the economy by failing to act, i.e., high levels of unemployment, lack of disposable income, effects to local businesses.

6. From your group's perspective, describe a desired "social network" to advance a regional economy involving these clusters.

- Essential for success is working with industry, state & federal agencies, economic developers, conservation groups, and educators.
- Network with youth organizations to build interest in the forestry related industries- all aspects from harvesting, production, restoration and stewardship. Maybe develop some type of a "small woods network" program for high schools and colleges around the area showcasing work in the forests
- Connect communities back to the forests - between recreational and economical opportunities, the forests in Western Montana still play a critical role in our communities. However, there is a disconnect between the newer residents and the younger generations. Build on programs like Northwest Connections and Provider Pals, where there is education mixed with social engagement, while providing a safe way to interact in the forests.
- Establish the connection between natural resources and consumer products.

7. Draft recommendations pertinent to an overall regional economy/approach

- Greater access to feedstock on National Forest lands, perhaps a percentage of land harvested each year on a sustainable rotation.
- Address GVW restrictions on public roads.
- Mitigate the lengthy appeal process and litigation; streamline NEPA process.
- Align the goals of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, energy mandate, and economic stability.
- Provide capital and incentives for forest technology, e.g., equipment, entrance into new segments of the industry.
- Establish regularly serviced railroad sidings at key locations to move products, especially for small diameter wood products.
- Establish a source of funding for restoration projects.
- Establish values for intangible forest qualities, i.e., clean water and air.
- Bear-the-burden legislation for corporate stewardship.
- Incentives for retaining corporate timber lands in the timber base.
- Create a list of definitions.

8. How do you see the Department of Labor's role as this process moves forward?

- The Dept. of Labor has an incumbent workforce training program in the Legislation right now that can be instrumental in training for forestry related jobs- For example, Robyn King with Yaak Valley Forest Council has wanted to host a restoration training where local contractors learn more of the restoration concepts (like replacing culverts) utilizing their current equipment. This might be a project the DOL could help fund or sponsor.
 - This would allow for the local workforce to bid on jobs that we see go out of state
- Modify Montana's Workman's Compensation Act to be competitive with those in surrounding states and/or available through private insurance programs.

Executive Summary

1. Write a brief description of your “Industry Cluster” findings, including identified workforce needs. (Could any of the workforce needs be categorized as ‘green’ jobs? Does this matter?

Once one of the State’s largest industries, the forest products industry has been in decline over the past 30 years. Aggressive harvesting, national policy and process that have restricted the supply of timber, competition from other building products, and importation of timber have all contributed to the decline. Recent energy issues represent an opportunity for resurgence in wood products and biomass use in western Montana. The renewable, smaller carbon footprint, natural carbon sequestering characteristics of wood products make it the original “green” product.

These opportunities will require both the skills of old, but also new skills for development and implementation of new technologies. These workforce needs are best achieved through education in support of the advances in technology in harvesting and processing smaller diameter, and waste wood material, particularly in the development of biofuels, and green building products. These jobs include a wealth of jobs from equipment operators and tree planters to biochemical engineers and lab technicians.

However, the feedstock issue must be addressed. Without a continuous supply of wood fiber, the industry will not be stable; new jobs and industries will not be created. If action is not taken soon, the existing infrastructure will continue to deteriorate and be lost. The decline of the industry has resulted in a loss of essential skills including millwrights, equipment operators, electricians, and foresters, among others. But without a supply of wood fiber for the various products, replacement of these skills is unnecessary.

2. Write individual recommendations to the desired end result.

- Quantify availability of accessible forest product feedstocks
- Gain financial support at the state level to invest in new forest technologies.
- Lobby for utilization of forest biomass on federal lands.
- Identify carbon sequestration and credit opportunities.

- Support the efforts to build a state wide Revolving Loan Fund program for timber related production/business development including biomass.
 - ~~Improve access to federal lands~~ Improve access to federal lands.
 - Address Gross Vehicle Weight restrictions on public roads.
 - Mitigate the lengthy appeal process and litigation; streamline NEPA process.
 - Align the goals of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, energy mandate, and economic stability.
 - Provide capital and incentives for forest technology.
 - Establish regularly serviced railroad sidings at key locations to move products.
 - Establish a source of funding for restoration projects.
 - Establish values for intangible forest qualities.
 - “Bear-the-burden” legislation for corporate stewardship.
 - Incentives for retaining corporate timber lands in the timber base.
 - Create a list of definitions.
 - Contracting issues related to Federal lands.
3. For each recommendation, list specific action steps for the next 12 months (to include benchmarks and responsible parties / “shepherds”) and “effectiveness measures”
- Quantify availability of accessible forest product feedstocks
 - RIG report available May 2009, Camas Creek Associates, report.
 - Gain financial support at the state level to invest in new forest technologies.
 - Identify funds available through the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009 and how they may be used to support these recommendations.
 - Strongly advocate for utilization of forest biomass on federal lands.
 - TBD
 - ~~Identify capital available~~ Identify capital available May 2009, Camas Creek Associates, report
 - Support the efforts to build a state wide Revolving Loan Fund program for timber related production/business development including biomass.
 - Revolving Loan Fund application already submitted to MT Department of Commerce for further action, Missoula Area Economic Development Corporation. Release of funds

- Build on successful collaborations.
 - On-going, local economic development agencies, more collaborative groups.
- Improve access to feedstock on National Forest lands.
 - Advocate for passage of legislation by Congress, Montana Congressional delegation, legislation passed. (Support industry based initiatives)
- Address GVW restrictions on public roads.
 - TBD, , GVW vehicle weights and road allowance coincide
- Mitigate the lengthy appeal process and litigation; streamline NEPA process.
 - In process, i.e., statute already in place requiring posting of bond by plaintiff, Congress, statutes in place to eliminate frivolous lawsuits.
- Align the goals of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, energy mandate, and economic stability.
 - TBD, coordination among statutes and economics
- Provide capital and incentives for new forest technology.
 - On-going, local, state, and federal governments, private industry, investors, release of funds and award of incentives.
- Establish regularly serviced railroad sidings at key locations to move products
 - TBD, State and BN, more needed rail spurs
- Establish a source of funding for restoration projects
 - Unknown, USFS, State, industry, targeted funding established .
- Establish values for intangible forest qualities.
 - TBD, , establishment of agreed values
- “Bear-the-burden” legislation for corporate stewardship.
 - TBD, State, legislation passed
- Incentives for retaining corporate timber lands in the timber base.
 - TBD, State, retention of corporate timberlands
- Create a list of definitions.
 - Spring 2009, RIG core leadership, published document

APPENDIX D – Health Care and Health Professions Findings and Draft Recommendations

1. Description of Health Professions cluster including identified workforce needs. Green jobs?/Does this matter?

The health care cluster in Western Montana includes hospitals (of varying sizes and capacity), doctors' offices and health care clinics, long-term care facilities, residential care facilities, in-home health care, medical suppliers, pharmaceutical manufacturers, education and training institutions, community management teams, and related professional organizations.

Segments of the health care workforce where there are identified needs for employees include nursing—LPN and RN (at varying levels—ASRN, BSN, MSRN), speciality areas in radiologic technology, long term care facilities, in-home care, and billing and coding. Additionally, there is currently a need for educators/trainers for the variety of programs preparing individuals for the currently available and emerging positions. {technology related positions}

As well, the health care industry in Montana needs to ready itself for and respond with health care services, systems of delivery, systems of initial education and training as well as continuing education and products which support the “aging” population (“baby boomers”). This segment of the population will also impact health and fitness systems, preventative care systems, and access to them as well as impacting the expectations for long term care and what that looks like now and in the future. [Nutrition & public health]

“Green jobs” which might be associated with health care are those which could be identified with ‘home employment’ such as medical transcription, possibly billing and coding, and the emerging in-home care positions. Use of the internet and other modes of electronic delivery for record sharing and for long-distance diagnosis opportunities may also be identified as ‘green’. [reduced need for facilities as the opportunities or reliance on electronic communication . . .]

Identify the workforce needs—those we will need . . . in 20 years

2. Individual Recommendations to include the desired end result.

- ✓ Educator and Trainer Professional development—requires up-to-date/current knowledge and skill base
- ✓ Develop coordinated communication/action paths between health care institution, education (K-16 education)
- ✓ Review of governing boards scope of authority and decision making opportunities: align the missions and goals of the governing boards (examples: Board of Nursing, Board of Regents)

- ✓ Funding education before K and after year 16
- ✓ Develop peripheral medical sectors such as medical equipment manufacturing and other products (example GSK)
- ✓ Coordinate professional accreditation and educational delivery with real world needs
- ✓ Use technology to improve cost-effectiveness education for medical professionals
- ✓ Support technology which increases medical institution's ability to expand cost effective access to rural patients for diagnosis and care
- ✓ Promote region as healthy lifestyle center – serves to market regional health care product and also improve amount of local dollars spent on preventable health issues
- ✓ Focus on care for aging Baby Boomers including in-home, nursing, and fitness
- ✓ Development of 'health professions' curriculum beginning in middle school and high school which will lead to post secondary education/training and/or employment [develop interest in the health professions]
- ✓ Increase the capacity of Montana Nursing programs

Observation: Numerous business opportunities exist for entrepreneurs in care and products for aging, in-home care, nursing home /long-term care, preventive care, and fitness.

3. For each recommendation, list specific action steps for the next 12 months to include benchmarks and responsible parties/"shepherds".

- ✓ Development of 'health professions' curriculum beginning in middle school and high school which will lead to post secondary education/training and/or employment
 - Create Western Montana Regional task force to identify curriculum for middle school and high school venues, to identify resulting curriculum for delivery in postsecondary institutions, to develop a model of communication and collaboration within/between these levels of education.
 - **Workforce training in a variety of approaches identifying 'credits' which will transfer into life long learning paths—Transferability {Broad}**
 - ◇ Individuals representing levels of education and health care
 - ◇ OPI
 - ◇ OCHE
 - ◇ Department of Labor

- ✓ Increase the capacity of Montana Nursing programs
 - Development of a 'simulator/simulation' plan which will coordinate with 'on-site clinical' experiences
 - Work with the Governor's office to identify funding for this simulator/simulation opportunity [Appropriate departments, agencies, communities, etc., with access to the funds.]
 - ◇ Department of Labor
 - ◇ RIG participants act as experts and provide technical information and support
 - Collaborate with Board of Nursing and other regulatory or supervisory boards toward identifying acceptable standards for 'clinical' practice toward Nursing degrees
 - ◇ Individuals representing postsecondary nursing programs
 - ◇ Health care institution representatives
 - ◇ Board of Nursing representatives
 - ◇ OCHE representatives

- ✓ Support technology which increases medical institution's ability to expand cost effective access to rural patients for diagnosis and care
 - Work with Governor's office to identify access to the Stimulus Bill funding
 - Develop and deliver distance learning opportunities
 - Reserve, secure appropriate bandwidth for cost effective communication across Montana specifically rural areas of Montana

- ✓ Develop peripheral medical sectors such as medical equipment manufacturing and other products (example GSK)
 - Contacting Medical manufacturing organizations to develop collaboration toward development of training and employment opportunities
 - [Transfer of Technology] . . . Use already developed technology; patent process training/awareness (global recommendation??)
 - Develop a network for 'rapid/response' requests and response to industry needs
 - ◇ Government, Industry, Education, [Economic Development] Triage

- ✓ Educator and Trainer Professional development—requires up-to-date/current knowledge and skill base
 - Health care Institutions identifying required professional development
 - Develop pipeline/collaboration for identifying necessary training/skill development
 - Educational/Training institutions responding

4. List what you consider to be “effectiveness measures”.

- ◇ Count # of ‘clinical slots’ for nursing program training purposes
- ◇ Placement in jobs and retention in employment: Professional Development measure
- ◇ Questionnaire of employees by employers—Poll applicants for professional development and recertification: Implement assessment of professional development; How accessible is professional development—ask health profession employees: Professional Development measure
- ◇ Prove how many positions were created by stimulus bill monies

Continuing Points of Interest or Issues

- Setting Expectations and Identify Accountability—by employers, trainers, employees
- Governors and Regents awareness of RIG results (and efforts)
- Don’t wait to solve the whole . . . begin by solving in pieces (Swiss cheese process)
- *Need to identify the public/private data gathering limitations of and accuracy of data

*Clinical slots . . . needed for other professions but within health care

??Montana status as a medically underserved by medical professionals??

APPENDIX E – Infrastructure/Public Works Findings and Draft Recommendations

By definition, infrastructure is the part of the community that is publicly owned. In most cases this is limited to streets, sidewalks, some utilities, etc. For the purposes of this Draft Recommendation, however, infrastructure shall be more broadly defined to include publicly and privately owned utilities, education, infrastructure needs for Energy, Health Care, Forestry (including Forest Stewardship, Restoration/Remediation, and Timber) industry clusters, and a basis for economic development.

Infrastructure is a critical foundation of industry and economic development. Without an infrastructure to support industry; including but not limited to roads, bridges, sewer and water, transportation, and other essential services, industry cannot sustain or grow. Since industry growth in Western Montana is crucial to a viable regional economy, infrastructure needs must be addressed and as a result can be considered an industry cluster.

Since infrastructure is essentially a construction/building/maintenance industry a wide variety of the workforce will be needed. Skilled labor such as heavy equipment operators, welders, construction workers, water quality specialists, and cement masons will be required. Professional labor like engineers, architects, and support/administrative staff will be needed as well as a number of unskilled labor and supervisory positions.

There are a few key challenges to successful implementation of and infrastructure/Public Works industry cluster. The Core Group identified three main gaps in this industry cluster and based its recommendations on the following:

- The industry cluster is essentially fragmented into separate entities. The problem lies in that small communities may not have as strong a voice to obtain necessary infrastructure funding as a larger community. We recommend facilitating region-wide collaboration to obtain funding for public works projects, such as community water and sewer projects as opposed to each community separately requesting funding. Local economic development organizations need to work together and identify local project, clarify timeframes, workforce and funding needs, collaborate with county officials and/or tribal governments. At that point a regional entity such as MACo can coordinate efforts to research and write appropriate region-wide needs, and specified by community.

- A collaborative higher education system. Due to the wide variety of training needs and skill sets needed in the changing workplace, contiguous access to education would prove more effective than identifying each needed skill set. We recommend facilitating a collaborative effort from all regional schools to utilize an educational infrastructure with a “no wrong door” approach to meet training needs. First steps would be to convene representatives from various COT’s, colleges and universities and high schools to identify barriers, and map out mutually beneficial solutions. Once a plan is strategized, collaboratively implement the plan, especially in rural areas using available technology. Meetings should take place within three or four months, sharing of facilities, resources and programs should begin by the following fall term. Collaboration should continue and have measured results as soon as possible.
- Allowing local contractors more freedom to be bonded for larger infrastructure projects. According to public works managers, significant barriers exist for local contractors to bid on and get large contracts, leaving the door open for larger, out-of-state contractors. We recommend that local contractors have the ability to bid and work on contracts over \$1million to keep more work here in the state. The state should examine these measures and take action as soon as possible.

One quantifiable measure of the effectiveness of the Infrastructure/Public Works industry cluster would be the creation of 600-800 new jobs. Since Western Montana already has a sizable trained workforce, a high number of new positions will not be needed in the short term. New people will obviously need to be trained for the long term, however. Another measure of the effectiveness of the cluster would be the collaboration of normally independent entities into a regional identity for the purpose of directing funding and completing projects.